

Overview of Federal Government Benefits and Benefit Programs

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- **Congressionally approved annual cost of living increase**
- **Accrual of annual and sick leave based on years of federal service**
- **10 paid federal government holidays per year**
- **Federal Employees Health Benefits program (FEHB)
to include availability of separate vision and dental plans**
- **Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS)**
- **Thrift Savings Plan (TSP)**
- **Federal Employees Group Life Insurance program (FEGLI)**
- **Flexible Benefit Program / Commuter Benefit Program**
- **Court furnished RTD-EcoPass/Guaranteed Ride Home Program (Subject to
available funding)**
- **Savings Bonds**
- **Federal Employees Group Long Term Disability program (FEGLTD)**
- **Long Term Care Insurance Programs**
- **Employee Assistance Program (EAP)**
- **Work Injury Benefits (Federal Workers Compensation)**

Annual Leave & Sick Leave

Most full-time employees earn both annual and sick leave each pay period.

Annual leave is used for vacations, rest and relaxation and personal business or emergencies. Most full-time employees earn 4 hours of annual leave per pay period with less than 3 years of federal service. With 3 - 15 years of federal service, 6 hours of annual leave are earned per pay period and with 15 or more years of service, 8 hours of annual leave is earned per pay period. A maximum of 240 hours of annual leave may be carried over into the next leave year.

Sick Leave is used for personal medical needs, care of a family member, care of a family member with a serious health condition or for adoption related purposes. Full-time employees earn 4 hours of sick leave per pay period. This leave can be accrued without an annual limit.

Upon separation from federal service, only unused annual leave will be paid out in a lump sum.

Federal Employees Health Benefits program (FEHB)

This program offers a choice of several health plans and various options within each plan. The employee and qualified family members are eligible to enroll. The government pays approximately 2/3 of the biweekly premium of the employee's selected plan with the employee paying 1/3. If enrolled, premiums are deducted (pre-tax) from the employee's paycheck.

Open season for new enrollments, health benefit changes, and/or enrollment into a different plan is available one time per calendar year. This open season occurs in mid-November of each year.

Upon separation a Temporary Continuation of Coverage plan is available. At that time the employee will pay the full premium of the selected plan (the 2/3 govt share and the 1/3 employee share).

Federal Employees Vision and Dental program

This program is new to 2007. Specific information will be available December 2006.

Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS)

For most employees it is mandatory to participate in FERS. Deductions are withheld from an employee's biweekly salary (pre-tax) and paid into the FERS fund maintained by the Office of Personnel Management. Employee's covered by FERS contribute to Social Security and Medicare programs through payroll deduction.

The purpose of this fund is to provide for a basic annuity paid out upon retirement. The basic annuity formula is 1% x total years of service x high-3 annual salary. In addition to the basic annuity, a retired employee will receive monthly social security retirement benefits and a TSP annuity.

Upon separation the monies paid into this fund are refundable, but are taxed prior to the issuance of the refund.

Thrift Savings Plan (TSP)

The TSP is one of the three parts of the FERS retirement package (FERS basic annuity, Social Security and TSP annuity). The purpose of the TSP is to provide tax-deferred retirement income. Contributions to the TSP account are voluntary.

The federal government provides the employee a 1% automatic agency contribution. The government will also match dollar for dollar the employees first 3% contribution and then 50 cents on the dollar for the 4th% and the 5th%. Employees are currently able to contribute up to a total of 15%.

New enrollments, changes to fund allocations, and interfund transfers can be made throughout the year via the TSP website.

Federal Employees Group Life Insurance program (FEGLI)

This program offers a basic term life insurance policy with additional life insurance coverage options. Term life insurance is coverage payable only upon the death of the employee.

The government pays for one-third of the cost of your Basic Life insurance. The Basic insurance coverage is an amount equal to the employee's annual salary rounded up to the nearest \$1,000 plus an additional \$2,000.

The additional term life insurance coverage options are:

- Option A = an additional \$10,000
- Option B = an amount equal to one, two, three, four or five times the employee's annual pay (after rounding up to the next \$1,000)
- Option C = provides coverage for spouse and eligible dependent children.

There are no anticipated open seasons for this program.

If the employee is already enrolled in Basic Coverage, increase of or enrollment in Options B and C are allowable only upon a life event, such as marriage, divorce, death of a spouse, or acquisition of an eligible child. If enrolled, premiums are deducted from the employee's paycheck.

Flexible Benefit Program

The Flexible Benefit Program has 3 components:

1. Health Care Reimbursement Account (max \$10,000)
2. Dependent Care Reimbursement Account (max \$5,000)
3. Premium Payment Plan (pre-tax option of health insurance premiums)

The Flexible Benefit Program is designed to put aside pre-tax money for reimbursement throughout the year for eligible medical expenses and dependent care expenses. This program also allows the employee to have their health insurance premium deducted from pay pre-tax. If enrolled, enrollment funds are deducted from the employee's paycheck.

Commuter Benefit Program

The Commuter Benefit Program is designed to put aside pre-tax money for reimbursement throughout the year for eligible commuter expenses.

Savings Bonds

U.S. Savings Bonds are an easy way to save money and a solid addition for any investment portfolio. Earnings from Savings Bonds are exempt from local and state income taxes, and Federal income taxes can be deferred until the bonds are redeemed or stop earning interest at 30 years. Series EE bonds are purchased through payroll deduction. Series EE bonds are available in denominations of \$100, \$200, \$500, or \$1,000.

Federal Employees Group Long Term Disability program (Federal First)

This long-term income protection plan is designed to replace income during pre-approved disability status. Premiums are based on age and annual income. Premiums are adjusted throughout the length of the policy as age and income increases. There is no government contribution to premiums. If enrolled, premiums are deducted from the employee's paycheck.

Long Term Care Insurance

Long term care insurance is designed specifically to cover the costs associated with extended long term care made necessary by an accident or disabling illness. Long term care insurance provides benefits for covered nursing home, home health care services, or hospice care. If enrolled, premiums are deducted from the employee's paycheck.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

The EAP was established to give employees the necessary resources to cope with life's difficulties. EAP counselors are prepared to help an employee deal with a multitude of problems. Whether an employee visits EAP for emotional, relationship, family, alcohol, drug, legal, financial or job concerns, they are available to help find a solution. All EAP services are free and in most cases available to the employee's immediate family members as well.

Work Injury Benefits (Federal Workers Compensation)

All employees are covered by the provisions of the Federal Employees' Compensation Act allowing compensation for injuries received in the performance of duties.

- * **Electronic Funds Transfer (direct deposit) is mandatory for payroll disbursement.**
- **Payroll is disbursed on a biweekly basis.**